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C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 002733

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PARM](#) [UN](#) [NP](#)  
SUBJECT: IAN MARTIN'S SHOP STAFFED UP AND POISED TO  
RUN...BUT WHERE?

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Nicholas J. Dean. Reasons 1.4 (b/d)

SUMMARY

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11. (C) In consultations October 12 with Charge and SCA/INS Director Marcia Bernicat, the UN Secretary General's Personal Representative to Nepal, Ian Martin, and Tamrat Samuel, visiting UN Political Advisor expressed measured optimism on the progress of GON-Maoist summit talks. Martin seemed poised to engage more substantially in "tripartite discussions" with the Seven-Party Alliance (SPA) and Maoists on the parameters of possible UN assistance. He said tripartite talks could provide a way for the UN to offer expertise and best practices on the details of complex settlement issues such as arms management and electoral reform. Martin felt his core team of four, all of whom will arrive by early next week, may be coming in the nick of time to provide what may be far-reaching UN assistance.

SEVEN-PARTY ALLIANCE-MAOIST-UN TRIPARTITE DISCUSSION?

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12. (C) Ian Martin, the UN Secretary General's Personal Representative to Nepal, expressed the UN's willingness to immediately engage in "tripartite discussions" between the SPA, Maoists and UN to hammer out the parameters of UN assistance. Martin said tripartite talks may also offer the opportunity for the UN to inject worldwide experience and best practices in arms management, electoral reform and other complex issues critical to the peace process. Martin said the SPA is eager for such a dialogue, already reaching out to the UN on possible models for arms management, but the Maoists need more time. Martin felt formal tripartite talks will likely have to wait until at least the outline of a peace deal is in place.

MARTIN TEAM STAFFING UP; MANDATE QUESTIONS ON HOLD

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13. (U) Martin expressed relief that most of his team had arrived or would arrive in the next few days to prepare for possible outcomes of the summit talks. The permanent team includes Electoral Advisor Ecaterina Salvu (Romanian), who arrived October 10; UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Military Advisor Jan Erick Wilhemson (Norway), who also arrived October 10; Political Advisor John Norris, a

former International Crisis Group (ICG) Analyst for Nepal, arriving October 15; and Ceasefire Monitoring Expert John Bevan (U.S.) arriving October 16. Tamrat Samuels is joining the team on a temporary basis in his capacity as a long-time Nepal watcher from the UN Department of Political Affairs.

¶4. (C) Although anticipating the potential for an increased UN role, Martin said more clarity was needed regarding the parameters of a peace deal before he re-engaged New York on the scope of his mandate and possible funding needs. Until tripartite discussions were held, it would be difficult to know what would be expected from his team.

#### UN PERSPECTIVES ON ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS

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¶5. (C) Martin and Samuels had few additional details on agreements reached in the day's GON-Maoist summit talks. However, they referenced a general feeling of "optimism" among the negotiating parties despite the complex details yet to be decided. They felt public expectations for a settlement were providing sufficient pressure on the parties to produce results. Martin and Samuels said that, while still chaotic in comparison to their Maoist counterparts, the SPA had shown improvements in putting forth a coherent and consensus message based on both internal party consultations and cross-party communication.

#### UN ON MAOIST INTENTIONS

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¶6. (SBU) Bernicat asked Martin and Samuels for any insights on Maoist intentions and plans. Martin referenced three tracks in which the UN had engaged the Maoists: 1) the

political track, through Samuels ongoing UN/DPA consultations; 2) the human rights track through the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' (OHCHR) dialogue and efforts to sensitize the Maoists on international human rights norms; and 3) through UN humanitarian activities in Nepal, educating the Maoists on humanitarian principles and Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGs) to ensure continued humanitarian space for activities. These three tracks, Martin said, had allowed the UN access to the Maoists at both the central political and local levels and provided some opening to inform Maoists of international standards and expectations vis-a-vis their participation in the peace process.

¶7. (C) Martin said he perceived the Maoists to have very sophisticated political and military leadership. However, he felt there was a lack of clarity regarding the strength of the Maoist command-and-control structure, referencing local Maoist "autonomous" structures that had become a bit "too autonomous," as well as the rise in localized and opportunistic criminality, extortion, and abductions. He questioned the ability of Maoist political and military leadership to "order down" commands and mentioned that a settlement may leave Maoist Chairman Prachanda with an enormous internal management challenge.

¶8. (C) Martin and Samuels reiterated what Bernicat was told by many in previous consultations--there are an abundance of conflicting signs in terms of Maoist intentions. Martin and Samuels stressed the difficulty of understanding Maoist goals until they are brought into governance structures under a peace settlement. Only at this juncture, Martin said, could the Nepali people and the international community have the ability to hold Maoists accountable and provide monitoring and oversight.

#### UN ON KEY NEGOTIATION ISSUES

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¶9. (SBU) ON ARMS MANAGEMENT: Martin said he felt the SPA was hanging tough on the arms management issue, inferring that U.S. statements may have helped them focus on arms management as a central issue to a successful settlement. He emphasized

the danger of the parties agreeing on interim steps (i.e. cantonment) without delineating what the next steps, or a more holistic and sustainable plan, would entail (e.g. separation of arms, an eventual plan for Maoist reintegration, or possible Maoist absorption into future security forces).

¶10. (SBU) ON THE CENTER VS. PERIPHERY DIVIDE: Samuels referenced the importance in the peace process of looking beyond just capital-centric political solutions to some of the underlying causes of conflict plaguing the country, specifically the need for the reassertion of governance and law-and-order outside of Kathmandu. He also connected the expansion of governance and security in the countryside to the feasibility of holding nation-wide free and fair elections. He raised the notion of mirroring power-sharing between the Maoists and the SPA in the capital with joint local administration in the districts that included international oversight, replacing parallel Maoist systems as necessary. Samuels emphasized the localized nature of conflict, stating that district-level structures would have to be designed to fit diverse local conditions and population needs.

¶11. (SBU) ON ELECTORAL REFORM: Martin said that UN electoral experts had concluded that it would be very difficult, but not impossible, to have constituent assembly elections before the beginning of the monsoon in June. Martin said he felt raising doubts on the timeline at this stage would not be helpful to the process, as it may undermine trust-building efforts between the parties. He preferred to let planning for the elections unfold, and for the UN to insert expertise as possible on steps necessary for a successful electoral process.

COMMENT  
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¶12. (C) While Martin seems relieved to have his team in place, he expressed some discomfort regarding his lack of control over the UN's imminent role in peace implementation. Based on the summit talks, a huge and complex set of responsibilities may land quickly in his lap. His willingness to initiate tripartite talks immediately may offer the UN's best chance to shape some of the technical aspects of a peace deal it will be expected to help implement. Martin and Samuels seem skeptical of the capacity of the negotiating teams to independently navigate the complex details and parallel issues that must be addressed for settlement. The potential for an increased UN role raises many funding and mandate questions which will have to be sorted out quickly.

¶13. (C) Martin hinted that the U.S. had been successful in raising arms management as a central issue in the peace process, but that the international community must now support the Nepalis through the broader range of difficult issues required for settlement. Martin inferred that the UN, as the accepted "popular kids" in town, should be used as the principal venue for shepherding international support. The United States should continue to strongly support the UN's role in Nepal's peace process.

¶14. (U) SCA/INS Director Marcia Bernicat did not have the opportunity to clear this message.  
DEAN